

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 18733

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IT

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S MEETING WITH SENATOR GIULIO ORLANDO

SUMMARY. IN THE COURSE OF A WORKING LUNCHEON ON DECEMBER 19, MINISTER OF POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS GIULIO ORLANDO STATED THAT HE HAS ORGANIZED A GROUP OF ABOUT FORTY REFORM-MINDED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC (DC) SENATORS WHICH IS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. ORLANDO SEES AS INCREASINGLY POSSIBLE ZACCAGNINI'S REELECTION AS PARTY SECRETARY AT THE MARCH DC CONGRESS WITH DEFENSE MINISTER FORLANI PERHAPS GETTING THE NOD FOR PRIME MINISTER TO SUCCEED MORO. HE BELIEVES THERE IS A LIKELIHOOD OF A CRISIS AFTER THE DC AND SOCIALIST (PSI) CONGRESSES. ORLANDO SUPPORTED THE IDEA OF THE DE MARTINO VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES, AND SAID THAT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS HE BELIEVES THE PSI WOULD BE PREPARED TO RETURN TO PARTICIPATION IN A GOVERNMENT PROVIDING IT WOULD RECEIVE MORE RESPONSIBLE MINISTERIAL POSTS. END SUMMARY.

1. I HAD A USEFUL WORKING LUNCH ON DECEMBER 19 WITH MINISTRE OF POST AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS ORLANDO AT WHICH WE HAD A VERY WARM AND FRIENDLY DISCUSSION. DURING THE COURSE OF OUR CONVERSATION, THE FOLLOWING POINTS OF INTEREST WERE RAISED.

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2. DC REFORM. ORLANDO HAS ORGANIZED AGGROUPOF

ABOUT FORTY REFORM-MINDED SENATORS, OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF ANY FACTION, WHICH IS DEDICATED TO PURSUING A POLICY OF REFORM AND REJUVENATION OF THE DC. ACCORDING TO ORLANDO, THE GROUP HAS A VERY FIRM ANTI-PCI POLICY AND IS TOTALLY COMMITTED TO THE IDEA OF SELF RENEWAL WITHIN THE DC. AT MY REQUEST, HE PROMISED TO SEND ME A LIST OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP. I INDICATED THAT WE HOPE TO REMAIN CLOSELY IN TOUCH WITH GROUPS THAT ARE PURSUING THIS LINE.

3. WHEN I EXPRESSED CONCERN AT THE SLOW PACE OF THE DC RENEWAL, ORLANDO STRESSED THAT CHANGING THE EXISTING PARTY APPARATUS AND BRINGING ABOUT A CHANGE IN POLICY IS NOT AN EASY MATTER. HE ADDED THAT WHILE ON THE SURFACE THERE IS NOT TOO MUCH EVIDENCE OF THIS PROCESS, THERE IS A GREAT DEAL BEING DONE BEHIND THE SCENES, MOST OF WHICH WILL BECOME APPARENT AFTER THE DC CONGRESS. AS FOR THE CONGRESS, ORLANDO'S GROUP IS TRYING TO INSURE THAT TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE THOSE WHO ARE ELECTED AS DELEGATES REPRESENT REFORM INTERESTS WITHIN THE PARTY.

4. DC PARTY LEADERSHIP. ORLANDO STATED THAT ORIGINALLY IT WAS FELT THAT DEFENSE MINISTER FORLANI WOULD HAVE TO ACCEPT THE DC PARTY SECRETARYSHIP IN ORDER TO DEMONSTRATE THE PARTY'S COMMITMENT TO REJUVENATION AND REFORM. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE KIND OF JOB THAT ZACCAGNINI HAS DONE, HE FEELS THE PARTY MIGHT WISH TO HAVE HIM STAY ON AS SECRETARY. FORLANI WOULD THEN BE A PRIME CANDIDATE TO SUCCEED MORO AS PRIME MINISTER. ORLANDO DISCOUNTED SOME VOICES WHO ARGUE THAT FORLANI MIGHT NOT HAVE THE EXPERIENCE TO BECOME PRIME MINISTER. HE FEELS THAT FORLANI HAS A GREAT DEAL ON THE BALL, AND IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT HE MIGHT NOT GROW INTO THE JOB, HE COULD ALWAYS BE SUBSTITUTED BY SOMEONE ELSE.

5. THE MORO GOVERNMENT. ORLANDO DOES NOT EXPECT A GOVERNMENT CRISIS UNTIL AFTER THE DC AND PSI CONGRESSES AT THE EARLIEST. HE DOES NOT BELIEVE IT IS TO ANYONE'S BENEFIT TO HAVE A CRISIS BEFORE OR BETWEEN THE

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CONGRESSES.

6. THE PSI. ALTHOUGH ACKNOWLEDGING THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH THE PSI, ORLANDO STATED THAT THE DC WILL HAVE TO COME TO TERMS WITH THAT PARTY IF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IS TO BE FORMED. IN HIS OPINION, THE PSI IS TALKING A BIG GAME ABOUT NOT GOING BACK INTO A CENTER-LEFT GOVERNMENT UNLESS THE

COMMUNISTS ARE IN SOME WAY ASSOCIATED WITH IT SO THAT THEY CAN SHARE THE BLAME WHEN THINGS DO NOT GO WELL. HOWEVER, HE FEELS THAT THIS IS ONLY A STRATEGY, AND THAT IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS THE PSI IS LOOKING FOR AND WOULD SETTLE FOR MORE RESPONSIBLE POSTS IN THE CABINET. AT SOME POINT, THE DC WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER BRINGING THE PSI INTO THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE WORTH PAYING THE PRICE THAT IS BEING DEMANDED. ORLANDO EXPRESSED HIMSELF IN FAVOR OF THE DE MARTINO VISIT TO WASHINGTON AND HOPED THAT WE WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO MAKE HIM FEEL WANTED AND NEEDED.

7. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PCI. ORLANDO REITERATED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS DURING OUR LUNCHEON THAT HIS COLLEAGUES AND HE ARE STRONGLY AGAINST PCI PARTICIPATION IN AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. THIS DOES NOT MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE FROM TIME TO TIME CONSULTATIONS WITH PCI REPRESENTATIVES ON LEGISLATIVE MATTERS. NOR SHOULD THIS BE CONSTRUED AS GIVING THE COMMUNISTS A VETO POWER OVER ANY LEGISLATION. THEIR IDEAS AND SOLUTIONS, IF ACCEPTABLE TO THE MAJORITY, SHOULD ONLY BE ADOPTED WHEN THEY ARE DEMONSTRATIVELY BETTER THAN THOSE ALREADY UNDER CONSIDERATION.

8. COMMENT. ORLANDO IS A VERY WARM AND ENGAGING PERSON WHO SUPPORTS STRONG ITALIAN TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE WELL REMEMBERS THE POSITIVE THINGS WE DID IN ITALY BOTH DURING AND AFTER THE WAR. AT THE SAME TIME, ORLANDO IS FIRMLY OPPOSED TO PCI PARTICIPATION IN AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. I SEE HIM AS A REAL COMER WITH WHOM WE SHOULD STAY IN CONTACT. VOLPE

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